

In this regard, it needs stressing again and again that no one is going to be happy with anyone else's budget priorities. I, for one, prefer a number of aspects of the President's education approach, am appalled by the Congress's refusal to fully fund the United Nations, and would be more sympathetic than the majority in my party to NPR and the Endowments on the arts and humanities. Yet, I am convinced America must come to grips with the budget and strongly support the faster Republican timeline for deficit reduction.

On process, let me stress that the Democrats have fairly criticized my party. The appropriations bills have not been completed on time. This is partly the case because of the heavy schedule earlier this year related to Republican efforts to fulfill a campaign pledge—the Contract With America. But, ironically perhaps, the primary reason for delay relates to the Republicans attempting to give the minority party expansive opportunity to amend bills brought to the floor under open rules. In a body of 435, extensive use of open rules assures a slow down of the legislative process.

Finally, let me stress that at issue are not only budget balancing and spending priorities but the question of whether a politically divided American Government can work and maintain the confidence of the American people.

As emotive as the issues are, we have a responsibility to see that on an orderly, fair, and timely basis they are resolved.

In this process we have an even larger responsibility not to divide America with inflammatory rhetoric or undercut the stature of this chamber with irresponsible choice making. The public's business requires decency of approach as well as purpose. Now is the time for personal pride and partisan ambition to be checked at the cloak room.

LET US TALK ABOUT MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, earlier today in this Chamber we debated a bill that was sponsored by the gentlewoman from Nevada [Mrs. VUCANOVICH] and also the gentleman from southern California [Mr. WAXMAN]. It was a bill to make minor changes in the law regulating pacemaker safety to make sure that over the years that Congress has been very involved in that issue, to make sure that Medicare does not overpay for defective pacemakers, that pacemakers that are implanted in people are indeed safe. It was a simple bill, a non-controversial bill, a bill that had bipartisan support, and a bill ultimately that passed by voice vote or passed pretty much unanimously.

I have been a Member of this body for 3 years representing a district in northeast Ohio, and something happened during that debate that troubled me as we discussed this bill. Some of us wanted to talk about Medicare as a whole, about the Gingrich \$270 billion cut Medicare plan, about Medicaid and all that this pacemaker issue included in other issues that Medicare—that revolve around Medicare, and clearly when any of us goes home and goes to our district, it is pretty obvious that Medicare is on the minds not just of people that are Medicare beneficiaries, of actual beneficiaries today, but of their children. It is on the mind, Medicaid is on the mind, of people that have to place their parents or grandparents in nursing homes, Medicaid is on the minds of people that—whose families might have Alzheimer's. It is Medicaid and Medicare issues that people want to hear about, and want to talk about, and want to see Congress debate, and unfortunately today, Mr. Speaker, as a couple of us wanted to talk about Medicare, especially specifically, and also Medicaid, there were Members of the majority party that—who supported the Gingrich plan that did not even want us to discuss it, that continue to say, "You're out of order," and try to get—try to stop us from discussing Medicare as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, the reason we wanted to discuss Medicare is that in this Chamber during the day when we are actually debating legislation, not in the evening in these special orders when few Members sit in this Chamber, but during the day; we only had 1 hour of general debate on the whole Medicare bill, and even worse perhaps, in committee. I sit on the Committee on Commerce, others that sit on the Committee on Ways and Means, and saw Medicare and Medicaid pass through those two committees with only one hearing in the Committee on Ways and Means and no hearings in the Committee on Commerce. We passed legislation changing a \$200 billion or a \$180 billion Medicare bill program that is \$180 billion a year spent on Medicare, about \$80 billion a year spent on Medicaid; we changed those two programs in a big, big way, markedly, with no real committee hearings.

And what bothered me is today we try to talk about nursing home standards, how this Congress wants to roll back all Federal nursing home standards that have made a big difference in dealing with the problems of oversaturation in nursing homes, made a big difference with the problems of neglect in nursing homes, made a big difference with the problems that nursing home patients, the most defenseless people probably in society have faced in the Federal Government involvement 10 years ago. These nursing home standards that this Congress passed, signed by President Reagan at that time, made a big difference in these people's lives in the twilight of their years, yet this Congress and the Ging-

rich plan repealed all of those nursing home standards.

We also wanted to talk about the premium increases. Under the Gingrich plan, \$270 billion in Medicare cuts and \$180 billion in Medicaid cuts over the next 7 years will mean doubling of premiums from \$46 a month up to almost \$100, will mean an increase in deductibles from now \$100 perhaps up to \$150, to \$200, maybe \$250, and it will mean an increase in co-pays in some versions of this bill which will be voted on for a second time in the next month.

They also did not try to—tried to call us out of order when they talked about how Medicaid has written out the disabled, and again some of the most vulnerable people in society, and they also—we wanted to talk about the spousal protection where if an elderly man's wife ends up in a nursing home, and paid for by Medicaid, that the husband can still live in his modest home without spending, selling the home, and having all the money go to the nursing home.

All of those kinds of issues were so important, and perhaps what they objected to the most was when I quoted Speaker GINGRICH when he said the response to criticisms about this Medicare bill, about the \$270 billion in cuts and when he obviously wanted to go much further in Medicare. He made a statement to a bunch of insurance executives, most of whom, is not all of whom, will benefit mightily monetarily, their companies and they individually, from this \$270 billion Medicare cut bill. Speaker GINGRICH said, "Now we don't want to get rid of Medicare in round 1 because we don't think that's politically smart and we don't think it's the right way to go, but we believe that Medicare is going to wither on the vine."

Two hundred seventy billion dollars in cuts for a tax break of \$250 billion for the wealthiest people in society with the hope that Medicare is going to wither on the vine. Mr. Speaker, it is simply not right.

BALANCING THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. FOX] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to address the House this evening on some important issues, not least of which would be the balanced budget. The balanced budget will be the most important bill that we hope the President will eventually sign.

You heard on the House floor tonight about certain claimants that could not get their Social Security benefits. Frankly all recipients of Social Security will get their benefits, but those that may have applied today will not do so because the President did not sign the balanced budget last night. He vetoed it.

Others, they say, could not get their veterans benefits applied for today. Frankly those veterans will get their benefits, but it has been delayed because the President did not sign the balanced budget.

The President says he favors a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker, but yet, when given the opportunity by having a bill from the House and the Senate, he failed to sign that bill which he says he really wanted originally. The crisis has not been caused by the Congress, the House or the Senate. It has been caused by the President's reluctance to sign the balanced budget.

And you say, "What's important about a balanced budget?" A balanced budget will help us decrease mortgages for families, decrease car payments, decrease the cost of a college education, decrease the cost of health care. The Federal Government has a role to provide services, but I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, it is not to continue the waste, fraud, and abuse that we have seen in the Government, but rather to make sure that the Federal Government takes care of those services that cannot be handled by State government or cannot be handled by private sector.

The big problem you hear about is Medicare, yes, but we are going to save Medicare. The fact of the matter is the trustees, the President's own trustees, have said recently, just back in this last spring, that Medicare as we know it will go bankrupt if we do nothing, and yet you might say, "Well, how did we get to that point?"

Well, health care goes up 4 percent a year, but Medicare is going up 10 percent a year, and the reason is fraud, abuse, and waste, \$30 billion a year in fraud, abuse, and waste.

Our solution: a Medicare Preservation Act that will create for the first time health care fraud in this country for those who abuse or commit fraud and abuse with Medicaid and Medicare. If you commit such an offense, 10 years jail, and you no longer can be a provider in that area.

We are also looking to reduce paperwork costs. Currently Medicare has 12-percent costs just in paperwork. That should be reduced to 2 or 3 percent at most because we want to see those services go to seniors. We also created a Medicare lockbox. Any savings in fraud and abuse will in fact go back to seniors' health care. We do not want to see, and the legislation does not provide for, any increase in copay, no increase in deductible. In fact this Congress under Republican leadership has given us two very good favorable senior citizen legislations that have passed; one, the increased eligibility for seniors who now presently make \$11,280 a year but frankly want to make more without a deduction from Social Security. They will be able to do it now as a result of our bill. In addition, seniors who have had to pay the onerous 1989-93 tax increase on Social Security, that

has been rolled back, so frankly it is the Republican-led Congress that is trying to find the ways to cut out the fraud, and abuse, and waste in Medicare, but make sure the health care that seniors deserve on the Medicare is preserved, and we can do that, and it is well helped by making a balanced budget, and we are hoping that the next time the President receives a bill from the House and Senate that has such wide support, that it in fact will get the President's signature because he knows, as we know, and the American people knew, when we can balance our budget and make sure we stop the waste of the bureaucracy in Washington, we will give the Government services people need and we will make sure that the people get their money's worth, just like they do from their State government, just like they do with the local government.

THE FEDERAL SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. BISHOP] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, there has been a lot of talk about a balanced budget and what the Republicans have offered, but the record ought to be set straight that they are not the only ones that have offered a balanced budget. The conservative Democrats have offered a balanced budget which was rejected by Republicans. It was a proposal to balance the budget in 7 years, consistent with the resolution passed by the House. It balances the budget through reductions in Government programs while preserving the Government programs that benefit society in maintaining the fundamental commitment of Government to its contract with people.

On welfare reform, the Democratic budget cuts welfare \$60 billion less than the Medicaid cuts in the leadership budget. The Democratic budget cuts \$40 billion over 7 years and the Republican budget cuts \$100 billion over 7 years. The Democratic budget places stronger work and personal responsibility requirements on individuals than the Republican budget, including a requirement that each individual implement an individual responsibility plan: immediate job training and a 5-year time limit on welfare benefits. It provides incentives and assistance in helping the poor get off welfare, including full funding for child care, full funding for workfare requirement, and State options to extend transitional medical assistance.

Regarding the earned income tax credit, the Republican plan would reduce the size and scope of the earned income tax credit. That amounts to a tax increase on the working poor. It would also roll back an important tax incentive for choosing work over welfare. The Democratic budget does not make these eligibility changes. Instead

it changes only those things to those which improve targeting and tax compliance with the program.

In education, the Democratic budget provides \$50 billion more in discretionary spending than the Republican budget over the next 7 years. The funds will make it possible to restore funding for Goals 2000, title I, impact aid, drug-free schools, and other programs that were cut by the Republicans. The budget rejects educational entitlement cuts.

The leadership budget, the Republican budget, makes \$10.2 billion in cuts. It would raise the cost of student loans by charging students interest during the 6-month grace periods after graduation. It would increase the cost of loans as much as a \$2,500 over the repayment period. It will raise interest rates on parent loans. It would terminate direct student loan programs.

Regarding agriculture, the Democratic budget makes reasonable cuts in agriculture, \$4.4 billion over 7 years. It continues existing farm programs with reasonable cuts so that farmers' operating programs, their financing and their investment plans will not be disrupted. The Republican budget, the so-called Freedom to Farm provisions, make \$13.4 billion in cuts. It makes no provision for the continuation of agriculture programs beyond the year 2002. It makes it more difficult for farmers to receive credit. It discourages cost-efficient investments in capital equipment.

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Also it removes the safety net of economic stability in rural communities. The President should not give in to blackmail. The Republican leaders in Congress are attempting to blackmail the American people into accepting a budget-balancing plan that pays for a massive \$245 billion tax cut for the rich by extreme \$450 billion reductions in Medicare and Medicaid.

The Republicans threaten to force the Government to default on its obligations and shut down unless the President lets them balance the budget in 7 years their way, a way that hurts seniors, hurts children, hurts farmers, hurts rural hospitals, and hurts college students.

I am a fiscal conservative. I support a balanced budget. Conservative Democrats offered a bill to balance the budget in 7 years that is credible, makes reasonable reductions in Government programs, while preserving those that benefit our Nation's people. The Republican majority reject this fair bill. Let us get a bipartisan agreement to balance the budget in a way that is fair and just to all Americans, not just the rich, but let us not give in to blackmail.